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Fifth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1289 (2000), by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) until 7 August 2000 and requested me to report to the Council on a regular basis on security conditions on the ground so that troop levels and the tasks to be performed by UNAMSIL can be kept under review. The report covers developments since my fourth report on UNAMSIL, issued on 19 May 2000 (S/2000/455). It also contains recommendations on the extension of the mandate of the Mission.

II. Political developments

2. During the reporting period, the situation in Sierra Leone remained tense and volatile under conditions that resemble civil war. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) continued to attack United Nations peacekeepers and pro-Government forces and, until recently, to detain and surround United Nations personnel. The programme for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration came to a standstill as various pro-Government groups rearmed and formed an alliance to fight RUF.

3. On 17 May, the Government of Sierra Leone announced that it would be willing to consider a ceasefire on condition that RUF cease its attacks on Government forces; withdraw to positions occupied prior to the ceasefire agreed to in May 1999, as well as from the diamond-producing areas; release all detained UNAMSIL personnel; and commit itself to the simultaneous and speedy disarmament of all armed groups.

4. On 16 June, at the opening of Parliament, the President of Sierra Leone, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, announced that his Government intended to pursue a two-track approach, based on both military and political action, to end the current hostilities. The Government also intended to carry out a review of the Lomé Agreement to determine which of its provisions have been rendered invalid by the current crisis and identify those that should be implemented. In the meantime, his Government would take a selective approach towards implementing the Peace Agreement, giving priority to the security, humanitarian and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration provisions. In this regard, the Government is pressing ahead with the retraining of the Sierra Leone Army with the assistance of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to meet its security needs, and is urging RUF combatants to lay down their weapons and join the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

5. The civil society of Sierra Leone and the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, headed by Johnny Paul Koroma, have also been engaged in exploring ways to restart the peace process. Its members agreed on the need to encourage the emergence of a new leadership for RUF and undertook to reach out to potential new RUF leaders. In their view, the Lomé Agreement remained a valid framework for restarting the peace process.

6. Reportedly, the Revolutionary United Front conducted a number of meetings to discuss its strategy and to restructure its leadership. Apparently, there was

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no unanimity of views among the various groups within RUF and it is unclear at this stage what its intentions may be or how its leadership is constituted. RUF has called for the release of Foday Sankoh and other RUF members in Government custody as well as for a cessation of hostilities by the pro-Government forces. On 17 July, Sam Bockarie (an erstwhile senior member of RUF now exiled in Liberia) called President Kabbah to inform the latter of his willingness to join the peace process.

Civil affairs

7. Owing to the resumption of hostilities early in May, no further progress has been made in the Government's efforts to restore civil authority throughout the country. The Vice-President, who chairs the Government's task force for the restoration of civil authority, has continued to meet with displaced provincial authorities, which are currently based in Freetown, to discuss plans and strategies for their return to the provinces once security conditions permit. UNAMSIL has participated in those meetings. The United Nations Trust Fund for Sierra Leone, if it attracts more contributions, is expected to play an important role in financing projects related to the restoration of civil authority in the country. As at 15 July 2000, total contributions received by the Trust Fund amounted to $2.1 million with expenditures authorized in the amount of $1.1 million.

8. Civil authorities in the Government-controlled Southern Province and in parts of the Eastern Province continued to operate without disruption, but under serious resource constraints. UNAMSIL redeployed a civil affairs coordinator to Kenema on 24 May and intends to redeploy one to Bo soon. In the Western Area, civil affairs coordinators have continued to work in both urban and rural districts.

Legal aspects

9. In a letter addressed to me dated 12 June, President Kabbah requested United Nations assistance to establish a special court to try Foday Sankoh and other senior members of RUF "for crimes against the people of Sierra Leone and for the taking of United Nations peacekeepers as hostages". Following this request, a senior legal officer of the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat conducted an information-gathering mission to Freetown to examine the Government's request and assess the needs, requirements and capacity of the local system for the administration of justice. During the discussions with representatives of the Government, judiciary, police and prison authorities, and the non-governmental organization community, a clear preference was expressed for a national court with a strong international component in all its organs (judges, prosecutors, defence counsel and support staff), and for international assistance in funding, equipment and legal expertise.

10. In establishing a special court under Sierra Leone law with United Nations and international assistance, the following issues will need to be addressed. The subject-matter jurisdiction of the court should include international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, consistent with the reservation entered by the United Nations at the signature of the Lomé Agreement. At the same time, crimes under national law would not be excluded. The personal jurisdiction of the court should include those most responsible for the serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in Sierra Leone. The temporal jurisdiction should extend to the period when the most serious violations of international humanitarian law had been committed. In this connection, the possibility was raised that the amnesty in the Lomé Agreement be revoked to the extent of its legality under international law. The death penalty was also discussed. In this regard, the United Nations and many of its Member States would not agree to be associated with a legal process which includes the imposition of the death penalty.

11. While the local system for the administration of justice is understaffed and underfunded, it is perceived to be an administration capable of producing a fair trial. For lack of adequate remuneration, there are very few judges on the bench, and the prosecution would require substantial assistance and legal expertise in conducting the investigations and prosecutions of the kinds of crime falling within the jurisdiction of the court. There are enough barristers, however, to serve as defence counsel if provided with adequate security guarantees. The security of the court, its premises, equipment, personnel and that of the accused, is the Government's main concern.

Regional efforts

12. States members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have been actively engaged in seeking a solution to the present crisis. They held several high-level meetings in which my Special Representative, Oluyemi Adeniji, participated, culminating in a number of decisions taken at the ECOWAS summit held at Abuja on 28 and 29 May. At that summit, ECOWAS established a six-member committee, composed of Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria and Togo, to facilitate a cessation of hostilities and to insist on a return by the fighting parties to positions they held at the signing of the Lomé Agreement on 7 July 1999. Additional troops from ECOWAS States would be made available to participate in UNAMSIL, whose mandate, as recommended by ECOWAS, should be revised to include peace-enforcement elements. ECOWAS further decided to investigate the disruption of the peace process as well as trafficking in diamonds.

13. The ECOWAS Committee of Six on Sierra Leone, whose task was to facilitate a cessation of hostilities, visited Sierra Leone from 13 to 20 June 2000, and paid a one-day visit to Liberia to meet with the President, Charles Taylor, on 19 June. Regrettably, the Committee was not able to secure any firm commitments. On 21 June, a ministerial delegation of the Committee met with the Security Council in New York and submitted to the Council an eight-point plan to resolve the crisis, based on the decisions of the ECOWAS Summit.

14. From 10 to 12 July 2000, I held consultations in Lomé on the margins of the Summit of the Organization of African Unity, with the heads of State of members of the ECOWAS Committee of Six, and, separately, with the heads of State of the three troop-contributing countries in the West African subregion, namely Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria. The aim of the meeting was to ensure that both ECOWAS and the United Nations would have a common understanding of the objectives of the international community's involvement in Sierra Leone as well as a common approach in reaching those objectives. At the meeting, it was decided that a coordination mechanism would be put in place to foster close cooperation and intensify the dialogue between the Government of Sierra Leone, ECOWAS and the United Nations. The United Nations, in consultation with the Government of Sierra Leone and ECOWAS, is working on the modalities of such a mechanism, which would operate on both political and operational levels.

15. While in Lomé, I also had a useful discussion on military and operational issues with the Chiefs of Staff of the armed forces of Guinea and Nigeria and with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana. At that meeting, participants agreed that UNAMSIL should work as a team under United Nations command. The meeting also discussed the lack of equipment in certain contingents. It is important that these shortfalls be addressed as soon as possible and I call on Member States to assist the current troop contributors to UNAMSIL to enable them to meet United Nations requirements.

16. On 19 and 20 July, a meeting of the ECOWAS Defence and Security Commission was held at Accra to discuss ways of enhancing subregional security, including the modalities for the deployment of additional troops for UNAMSIL. The meeting commended UNAMSIL for extracting its troops surrounded by RUF at Kailahun and called on those countries that have promised to do so to take urgent measures to fully equip troops from ECOWAS countries currently serving in UNAMSIL. The meeting also reiterated the need for a change of the mandate of UNAMSIL from peacekeeping to peace-enforcement and reaffirmed the commitment of ECOWAS member States to contribute additional troops to an expanded UNAMSIL as soon as the required logistical support is provided.

17. The ongoing hostilities have aggravated tensions between Sierra Leone and Liberia, which could undermine the efforts of the Mano River Union to build confidence between Sierra Leone and its neighbours. The Government of Liberia has made allegations about Sierra Leone's support for Liberian dissidents and accused Guinea of providing support for the recent incursion by dissidents into northern Liberia. Guinea has denied these accusations. For its part, Sierra Leone has alleged that Liberia is supporting and arming RUF.

III. Security situation

18. During the period under review, the general security situation in the country remained volatile and unpredictable owing to continuing RUF attacks on UNAMSIL and on an alliance of pro-Government forces, which consists of the Sierra Leone Army (SLA), the Civil Defence Force, and some of the forces

loyal to the former Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC/ex-SLA).

19. The Freetown and Lungi peninsulas remained relatively stable owing to the deployment of UNAMSIL, pro-Government forces, and the troops deployed by the United Kingdom at Lungi. There have, however, been a few serious incidents in Freetown. On 22 May, AFRC/ex-SLA elements attacked and killed two United Nations peacekeepers of the Nigerian contingent at Wilberforce Barracks and two SLA soldiers at the residence of the President's chief security officer. AFRC/ex-SLA elements were also involved in a shooting incident in the Juba Hill area of Freetown following a dispute over a vehicle. The situation was brought under control by UNAMSIL and the AFRC/ex-SLA elements involved were arrested. On 17 June, another shooting incident occurred near the Pademba road prison, during which one civilian was killed.

20. The United Kingdom troops, who were deployed early in May and who made a significant contribution to stabilizing Freetown and Lungi, departed Sierra Leone in mid-June. Some 200 United Kingdom military personnel arrived in Sierra Leone in the course of June as part of the United Kingdom training programme for the Sierra Leone Army. Two British warships remained off the coast of Sierra Leone.

21. Revolutionary United Front attacks on UNAMSIL and on the pro-Government forces have been carried out mostly in the Northern Province since its advance on Freetown was halted in May. The most serious attacks included a series of battles over Lunsar and Rogberi, both of which changed hands between RUF and the Sierra Leone Army several times. On 24 May, two international reporters and two Sierra Leone Army soldiers were killed in an ambush by RUF fighters on 24 May near Rogberi junction. On 6 June, RUF attacked Kabala, which prompted UNAMSIL to expedite the relocation of the Kenyan contingent that had moved there since breaking out of a RUF siege at Makeni. On 30 June, RUF fighters ambushed an escort of the Mission's Jordanian contingent, during which one peacekeeper was killed and four others were wounded, while most of the attackers were killed in the robust response by UNAMSIL. RUF also staged a series of attacks on the Jordanian company deployed at Rokel bridge as well as on the positions of the Nigerian contingent at Port Loko. On 16 July, a Nigerian soldier was killed in an ambush on his patrol. On 22 July, there was an ambush by the so-called "West Side Boys" (a group of AFRC/ex-SLA elements) of a UNAMSIL convoy during which a Guinean peacekeeper was injured. On 4 July, RUF attempted to take Masiaka from pro-Government forces. However, UNAMSIL moved swiftly and dislodged the RUF rebels from Masiaka the same day after a brief exchange of fire. Because of the location of Masiaka at the junction of the strategic routes to Port Loko, Mile 91 and the Southern and Eastern Provinces, UNAMSIL has reinforced its deployment there.

22. Tension and occasional clashes within the pro-Government alliance significantly hampered its effectiveness and may have emboldened the Revolutionary United Front to regain territory. On 31 May, RUF took advantage of fighting between the Sierra Leone Army and at Rogberi and dislodged the pro-Government forces who withdrew to Rokel bridge. UNAMSIL troops recaptured Rogberi on 2 June. Clashes between the Sierra Leone Army and the West Side Boys, over promotions announced by Defence Headquarters which excluded AFRC/ex-SLA soldiers, were similarly exploited by RUF, resulting in the recapture of the town of Lunsar on 15 June. There were further clashes between the Sierra Leone Army and the West Side Boys on 28 June at Masiaka, which prompted the latter to erect roadblocks between Magbuntoso and Masiaka to prevent movement of SLA soldiers. UNAMSIL cleared the roadblocks, but RUF subsequently overran Masiaka and forced the Sierra Leone Army to withdraw to Mile 38 on 4 June.

23. Efforts by the Government and AFRC/ex-SLA leader Johnny Paul Koroma to resolve the problems between the Sierra Leone Army and the West Side Boys did not yield the desired results. The Government issued an ultimatum to convince the West Side Boys to disarm so that they may be screened for training for the new army. However, they withdrew into the Occra Hills area and refused to comply with the Government's demands. In that area, the group again set up illegal checkpoints extending to Masiaka, harassed civilian traffic, and interfered with the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the freedom of movement of UNAMSIL. In addition, UNAMSIL received indications that the group might have considered joining RUF and attacking UNAMSIL. To pre-empt such an attack, UNAMSIL launched a military operation on 22 July to remove illegal checkpoints and to clear the Occra Hills area of armed

groups. The operation was successful and was concluded without casualties on the part of UNAMSIL.

24. In my previous report, I indicated that securing the immediate release of the United Nations personnel detained by RUF remained the United Nations highest priority. Strong and sustained efforts were made by the United Nations at all levels, as well as by regional leaders, to seek their release. As a result, 461 United Nations personnel that were being detained by RUF in Kono district were released through Liberia between 16 and 28 May 2000. One Zambian soldier who went missing during the attack by RUF on Rogberi found his way to Occra Hills and was brought to Freetown by AFRC/ex-SLA soldiers on 4 June. Twenty-one Indian soldiers who were being held at Kuiva, and were later moved to Pendembu, were released through Liberia on 29 June and transported to Freetown on United Nations aircraft the following day. I should like to acknowledge the important role played by President Taylor in the release of those peacekeepers. At the same time, I remain concerned that the weapons and equipment taken by RUF from all the detained soldiers have not been returned.

25. For its part, UNAMSIL kept its lines of communication with RUF commanders open. The Force Commander and the Deputy Force Commander spoke to senior RUF commanders by telephone to convince them to release the detained United Nations personnel. The commander of the Mission's Indian contingent at Daru also held regular meetings with RUF ground commanders to discuss the release of the detainees held at Pendembu and to secure the freedom of movement of the personnel encircled at Kailahun. The contacts with the RUF commanders enabled UNAMSIL to send regular convoys to supply rations to the personnel held at Kailahun and Pendembu. However, these convoys had to be curtailed in view of deteriorating road conditions and mounting indications that the RUF position in that area was hardening. RUF refused to allow re-supply by helicopter.

26. Since intensive diplomatic and political efforts, at all levels, to seek a solution by peaceful means were unsuccessful, UNAMSIL decided to launch a robust military operation to ensure the security of United Nations personnel and to restore their freedom of movement, in accordance with its mandate and rules of engagement. The operation, was carefully planned in advance by the Force Commander of UNAMSIL, Major General Vijay Kumar Jetley, and the UNAMSIL military staff, in close consultation with my Special Representative. The operation itself was conducted by elements from four contingents. The majority of troops engaged in the operation were from the Indian contingent, while vital support was provided by units from Ghana and Nigeria. The United Kingdom provided important logistical support. I should like to express my deep appreciation to the Governments involved for their participation in this international effort and their commendable display of solidarity.

27. The operation started at dawn on 15 July and was conducted in four phases: extraction by air of military observers and non-combatant personnel from Kailahun, a forceful break-out from the compound, link-up with forces moving up from Daru, and airlift and ground movement back to Daru. Throughout the operation, UNAMSIL troops came under fire from ambushing RUF fighters, while advancing slowly over very bad roads in adverse weather conditions. However, by the evening of 16 July, all troops involved in the operation had reached the safety of United Nations bases. Regrettably, one Indian soldier was killed and six others were wounded during the operation. RUF casualties are unknown, but believed to be significant.

28. Six bodies, which are possibly those of missing United Nations peacekeepers, were discovered at Rogberi junction on 22 May after pro-Government forces captured the town from RUF. The pro-Government forces later buried the bodies. A United Nations forensic team was sent to the mission area from 25 to 28 June. The team exhumed the bodies and commenced the process of identification. Human remains in a Zambian uniform with United Nations markings was discovered on 16 July by a UNAMSIL patrol near Rogberi. Efforts are under way to recover and identify the remains.

Deployment of the Mission

29. Since my last report, new troops from Bangladesh, India and Jordan have arrived in the Mission area, bringing the troop strength of UNAMSIL to 12,428, as at 22 July 2000. With the expected arrival of a Russian military aviation unit, the military strength of UNAMSIL would approach the ceiling set under Security Council resolution 1299 (2000).

30. In the Western Area, UNAMSIL troops are deployed at Freetown, Lungi, Pepel and Tasso Islands, Lungi Lol, Hastings, Newtown, Sumbuya, Waterloo

and Grafton. In the Northern Province, UNAMSIL is deployed at Port Loko, Masiaka, Mile 91, Rokel bridge and Rogberi junction. The Southern Province is under the control of UNAMSIL troops and the Civil Defence Force. UNAMSIL troops are deployed at Moyamba and Bo. Most of the Eastern Province remains under RUF control with UNAMSIL deployed at Kenema, Daru and Joru. The composition and deployment of UNAMSIL are given in the annex and attached map.

31. The major focus of the Mission's operations during the period under review was to consolidate its troops at key positions in the Western Area and Lungi peninsulas as well as on the main access roads to the capital in order to ensure the protection of the civilian population in Freetown and the security of the Government of Sierra Leone. Deployment in the strategic areas mentioned above has kept the important Freetown-Rogberi-Lungi and Freetown-Masiaka-Kenema routes open. It has also created the necessary environment for United Nations military observers to resume patrols in these areas. However, the Mission's deployment continues to stretch its resources and has left it exposed to possible attacks by RUF at relatively remote locations, such as Mile 91 and Daru.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

32. The disarmament and demobilization process remained at a standstill. Two demobilization centres at Makeni and Magburaka had been destroyed by the RUF rebels and operations have been suspended at four of the remaining seven centres. The payment of the transitional safety allowances has also been suspended at all camps. Three demobilization centres remained open: Port Loko, Lungi and Daru, which hold approximately, 300, 1,150 and 500 ex-combatants, respectively, mostly AFRC/ex-SLA. The Government and UNAMSIL continue to provide an opportunity for fighters of RUF and other groups to report for disarmament without fear for their security. A handful of RUF and ex-SLA combatants have come forward for disarmament at Lungi, Kenema and Daru, especially since the robust UNAMSIL operation at Kailahun.

33. There is general consensus among the Government and its international partners, including the United Nations, that the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme will require a comprehensive review. The National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration has been holding weekly meetings at the technical level to identify aspects of the programme that need to be reviewed. The Committee has also been addressing the challenges posed by the current security situation to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, in particular how to handle surrendering and captured RUF fighters. Formal consultations on the programme between all interested parties will be held by the National Commission on 27 and 28 July.

34. The National Commission has also been looking into the implications for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme of the ongoing rapid training of Government troops by the United Kingdom short-term training team. Some of the ex-Sierra Leone Army soldiers to be screened for training are currently under the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, and those who do not pass the screening exercise are expected to join the programme.

35. At the request of the Government, UNAMSIL has started identifying weapons collected during the disarmament exercise which belong to the Sierra Leone Army. The weapons are reported to have been stolen from Government armories or surrendered by the disarmed AFRC/ex-SLA soldiers. They are, therefore, being returned to Defence Headquarters. To date, 525 assorted weapons have been handed over.

36. The National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration has also approved six reintegration projects to benefit about 1,122 ex-combatants in agriculture and skills training in road maintenance and production of construction materials. Consultations are also being held at the chiefdom level for the implementation of these projects.

IV. Human rights

37. The persistent fighting in many areas of the country continued to have a direct effect on the civilian population and resulted in human rights violations by all fighting groups. These include extrajudicial executions, mutilation, torture, rape and sexual abuse, forced labour, abduction and forced recruitment, use of children as soldiers, the destruction and looting of civilian property and massive internal displacement of persons. The fighting, as well as fear of both the RUF and the Government's helicopter gunship, have caused thousands of civilians to flee. Internally displaced

persons, who mostly travel on bush roads, report that many villages are empty and/or burned, especially in the Makeni/Magburaka area.

38. Based on testimonies from newly arrived internally displaced persons at Mile 91 and in Port Loko, UNAMSIL has documented several cases of summary executions and some new amputations and mutilations of civilians by RUF. It is also alleged that RUF "Small Boys Units" have been ordered to execute deserters or RUF members unwilling to fight. Rape and sexual abuse of women and girls continue. Women — including lactating women with babies — and girls are often abducted, beaten and used for forced labour and as "wives". Medical professionals indicate that most women among the internally displaced persons have contracted sexually transmitted diseases, frequently as a result of rape. As noted in my previous reports, female victims often do not report the incident or seek appropriate treatment for lack of services or fear of stigmatization.

39. Eyewitnesses report that there have been civilian casualties in attacks by the Government-operated helicopter gunship. On 31 May, an air attack on Makeni reportedly killed at least 12 civilians and wounded many others. It is reported that two civilians were killed in Makeni on 1 June; and at least six civilians, including women and children, are reported to have been killed in an early afternoon attack on the market in Magburaka on 7 June. Reports of some extrajudicial killings, the use of child soldiers and the mistreatment of RUF detainees by the Civil Defence Force have also been recorded. UNAMSIL has protested about these incidents to the Government.

40. UNAMSIL monitored the treatment of RUF personnel detained by the Government and Government-allied forces at Bo and Port Loko. Apparently, half of the detainees surrendered themselves into police custody for fear of reprisals by the Civil Defence Force or were taken by the police into "protective custody" following fighting at Mile 91. In Freetown, access to visit the RUF detainees in Government custody continues to be denied to UNAMSIL, despite repeated requests made to the Government. UNAMSIL has also investigated alleged cases of mistreatment of RUF elements at the time of their arrest by UNAMSIL troops. UNAMSIL has raised these issues with the contingent involved.

41. The establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the National Human Rights Commission, both delayed by the hostilities that recommenced in early May, are again being considered by the Government of Sierra Leone in collaboration with UNAMSIL and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Child protection

42. Both the Revolutionary United Front and pro-Government forces continue to use children as combat soldiers. RUF has engaged in fresh recruitment of children. At Makeni, both children and adults were put under pressure by RUF fighters to join them. RUF troops are reported to have killed two boys and a young man on 31 May at Maforay village near Port Loko, after they refused to join their fighting forces. Government-allied forces are also reported to use child soldiers in combat. On 12 June, in a demobilization of alleged child soldiers in Government-allied forces at Masiaka, only 13 children out of 135 handed over were serving as combatants (nine were with the Civil Defence Force and four with AFRC). I urge all fighting forces to immediately release all child combatants among their forces and to cease the recruitment of children as combatants.

V. Civilian police

43. The ongoing hostilities are hampering effective implementation of the concept of operation of the United Nations civilian police advisers and the restructuring of the Sierra Leone police. The uncertain security situation has also discouraged donor countries and consequently aggravated the financial constraints on various projects and the police training programme. The local police, who are mostly unarmed, find it difficult to operate in the prevailing security situation owing to the large number of armed elements, particularly in Freetown.

44. Policing remains limited to Freetown, Moyamba, Bo, Lungi, Pujehun and Kenema. Despite the constraints mentioned above, the Sierra Leone police are playing a prominent role in the prevention of crime in those areas. They have mounted joint patrols and crime prevention efforts with the pro-Government forces and UNAMSIL, which has increased public confidence.

45. A total of 44 police stations and posts are functioning in Freetown, Bo, Moyamba, Lungi, Pujehun and Kenema. Nine are not operational because they are either destroyed or located in RUF-occupied areas. With the influx of internally displaced persons to Mile 91, the Sierra Leone police increased its presence in the area. Efforts to improve relations between the police and the public continued with the introduction of community policing projects. This process started in Lungi and will continue to the eastern part of the country.

46. The strength of United Nations civilian police advisers currently stands at 37. They are deployed at Freetown, Lungi, Bo, Moyamba, Kenema, the Crime Investigation Department, the Elections Commission, the Joint Coordination Committee and the Police Training School. The further deployment of advisers to other areas has been suspended until the security situation improves. Police advisers and the Institute of Public Administration and Management in Freetown are in the process of compiling managerial courses for the police. The advisers are also engaged in the retraining of police officers, and 1,300 officers have so far been retrained.

VI. Humanitarian aspects

47. Following the resumption of hostilities in Sierra Leone, more than 150,000 new internally displaced persons have been registered by aid agencies, bringing the total number to about 310,000. An additional 100,000 new internally displaced persons are estimated to be residing within host communities, while more than 1.5 million war-affected individuals, 1 million of whom are in inaccessible areas under RUF control, are also in need of assistance. Most of the newly displaced persons have found sanctuary in the greater Freetown and Lungi peninsula areas, where they have overwhelmed already congested camps. Another 40,000 to 50,000 internally displaced persons have moved to Mile 91, following increased RUF attacks on villages as well as Government attacks and threats in the form of leaflets dropped from a helicopter. Some 5,000 Sierra Leoneans were reported to have fled into Guinea, joining about 450,000 Sierra Leonean refugees already in that country.

48. Following the increase in military operations in the Eastern Province, thousands of newly displaced Sierra Leoneans fled to Kenema and Daru. Of these, about 30 have been treated for war-related injuries. Overall access for humanitarian workers continued to decrease and security conditions remained poor, in particular beyond Waterloo, owing to tension between pro-Government forces in the Occra Hills. Key routes for the delivery of assistance upcountry, such as the road between Masiaka and Mile 91, remain vulnerable to RUF attacks. The Civil Defence Force continues to harass and extort fines from humanitarian agencies in the Southern Province.

49. The World Food Programme and non-governmental organizations continued to provide substantial food assistance to internally displaced persons and war-affected populations. Food, health, agriculture, water, sanitation and child protection programmes continue in the relatively stable Southern Province. In response to severe overcrowding in Freetown and other areas, the Government and aid agencies have begun the expansion of existing camps in Port Loko, Grafton and Waterloo. Plans are also under way to create new camps at Mile 91, where food security and health conditions have rapidly declined.

50. Given the deteriorating humanitarian situation, resources are needed to provide immediate life-saving support first to some 200,000 most vulnerable Sierra Leoneans displaced by the current crisis. Serious shortfalls in shelter materials, in particular in plastic sheeting and non-food items, remain a critical concern as the rainy season advances. Priority must also be given to emergency health projects, as the combination of the rains, poor camp conditions, and the movement of people is likely to increase the incidence and spread of disease among the internally displaced population. Already four deaths in Freetown have been attributed to lassa fever, a disease typically confined to the Eastern Province. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Ministry of Health are closely monitoring the situation and sensitization internally displaced persons on preventative measures. A recent outbreak of shigella (bloody diarrhoea) among the displaced population at Mile 91 is a cause for alarm, as the disease has already claimed 10 lives in less than two weeks. The Ministry of Health and Sanitation, UNICEF and non-governmental organizations are working to address the situation.

51. The mid-term review of the United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal will be issued on 26 July, reflecting a re-prioritization of humanitarian assistance needs based on the current crisis. Donors

have contributed only about US$ 14 million in new funding against the $60 million requirement for humanitarian programming. This has allowed for considerable support to be given in some areas, but a much more robust donor response is needed to deal adequately with the rapidly escalating needs in Sierra Leone. The revised appeal, which requests $60.7 million in humanitarian assistance, is at present only 40 per cent funded. I urge the international community to contribute generously to this appeal in order to allow a swift and vigorous response to the humanitarian and rehabilitation needs of the country.

VII. Public information

52. In accordance with the recommendations outlined in my fourth report, the UNAMSIL Public Information Unit has been strengthened significantly and its operations have been broadened. Radio UNAMSIL continues to be the focal point of the Mission's public information strategy, which aims to familiarize the people of Sierra Leone with the Mission's role and functions and to inform them of relevant political and military developments in Sierra Leone. Radio UNAMSIL is currently broadcasting news and popular music. Coverage includes all core UNAMSIL components, together with United Nations Radio News and current affairs, and activities of United Nations agencies and partner organizations in Sierra Leone. It is also planned to broaden community participation, with some programming broadcast in Krio, with the local Mende, Temne, Limba and Soso languages to follow. The Government of Denmark is offering much appreciated engineering assistance to help set up and service the station studios and to provide training.

VIII. Enhancing the effectiveness of the Mission

53. Following the events that occurred early in May 2000, I sent a high-level multi-disciplinary assessment team, led by Mr. Manfred Eisele, former Assistant Secretary-General in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, to Sierra Leone to review the operations of UNAMSIL and report on measures that could be taken to make the operation more effective. The assessment team visited Sierra Leone from 2 to 8 June and submitted its report to me on 13 June. Based on its terms of reference, the team reviewed UNAMSIL operations, processes and procedures, as well as the management of the Mission and its internal flow of information. It visited contingents in the field and met with both the civilian and military leadership of UNAMSIL, as well as the President of Sierra Leone, Government officials, ambassadors, representatives of United Nations agencies, national and international non-governmental organizations, and civil society.

54. The team found a serious lack of cohesion within the Mission as well as a number of other shortcomings. In particular, the team found that there was no commonly shared understanding of the mandate and rules of engagement, as well as other problems in command and control. Some contingents were insufficiently prepared to deal with the difficult environment and logistic challenges on the ground, in spite of extensive briefings at Headquarters. There were also serious problems related to internal communication and coordination between the civilian and military components, as well as within each component (owing in part to a lack of communications equipment). The team also noted a lack of integrated planning and logistic support as well as insufficient coordination and sharing of information with United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and diplomatic missions in Freetown. Some military units showed a lack of training and others had serious shortfalls in equipment. Essential military support units were lacking, in spite of attempts to find Member States willing to make such units available. The Mission's public information efforts and relations with the general public could be improved. The team drew up a number of detailed recommendations to improve the operational effectiveness of UNAMSIL, which have been further analysed and assigned to various units in UNAMSIL and at Headquarters for immediate follow-up.

55. An important cause of these shortcomings was the fast growth of the Mission from a small team of military observers to a large multi-disciplinary peacekeeping operation with complex organizational and logistical requirements. While the UNAMSIL staff worked very hard to cope with this rapid growth, the Mission had not yet adjusted to its new role and size when the crisis broke out in May. In addition, early in May UNAMSIL was in the process of moving its headquarters, leading to additional problems in communication among components, and was also

asked to support an unanticipated and massive air deployment of reinforcements to the Mission.

56. Many of the problems described above have meanwhile been addressed. UNAMSIL is conducting a review of its internal organizational structure in consultation with the Secretariat. The Mission's military headquarters has established a joint operation cell, including officers from all contingents, and is setting up mixed civilian-military coordination mechanisms, including on logistic support. The strength of the force and subordinate headquarters is being strengthened with additional staff officers. Good progress has been made in regular meetings between the Secretariat and troop contributors to address issues of command and control and shortfalls in equipment. Similar meetings were held in the field between the leadership of the Mission and contingent commanders to discuss the mandate, explain the rules of engagement and improve internal communication. An internal training programme on the rules of engagement is under way. As described above, the public information component has been strengthened and UNAMSIL radio has commenced broadcasting. Consultations with United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations have also been strengthened. To strengthen the overall management of the Mission, I have appointed an experienced peacekeeping official, Behrooz Sadry, as my Deputy Special Representative.

57. Additional contingent equipment, including vehicles, has arrived in Freetown in recent weeks. Those contingents which had lost equipment in confrontations with RUF have now replaced all but their heavy equipment. However, these sincere efforts need to be supplemented by outside assistance and I call upon all Member States to help all contributors to meet United Nations standards of equipment. The Secretariat continued to seek contributions by Member States of specialized military units, such as logistical and signal units. However, until very recently, no Member States had come forward to make such units available.

58. An emergency airlift of communications equipment from the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi and other United Nations peacekeeping operations was conducted in response to the outbreak of the crisis in May. To address shortfalls in equipment, the United Nations will provide defence stores, tents and other accommodation, electrical and other minor engineering support for several contingents, and communications assets for all sector headquarters and some contingents.

IX. Financial aspects

59. The General Assembly, by its resolution 54/241 B of 15 June 2000 appropriated the amount of $476.7 million for the maintenance of UNAMSIL for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001. This appropriation was based on a strength of 11,100 military personnel authorized by the Security Council in its resolution 1289 (2000).

60. Pending submission to the General Assembly of my revised budget for UNAMSIL, it is my intention to cover the immediate costs in connection with the deployment of additional military contingents authorized by the Council in its resolution 1299 (2000), by which the Council expanded the military component of UNAMSIL to 13,000 personnel, and any further military deployments should the Council so decide, within the initial level of resources already approved by the General Assembly for the financial period 2000-2001. As at 15 July 2000, unpaid assessed contributions to the special account for UNAMSIL amounted to $143.7 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at the same date amounted to $2,448.6 million.

X. Observations and recommendations

61. Despite some improvements, the situation in Sierra Leone has remained dangerous and volatile. UNAMSIL, after the setbacks suffered early in May, has demonstrated its capacity assertively, especially since the successful operation conducted recently to rescue the military observers and troops surrounded by the Revolutionary United Front at Kailahun. The force has reinforced its hold on strategic areas and access roads and has also dealt decisively with an armed group which harassed civilians and interfered with the Mission's freedom of movement and with the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

62. The threat posed by RUF remains a matter of grave concern. So far, it has shown no credible sign that it would be ready to resume the peace process and it has continued to attack UNAMSIL and pro-Government forces. A key objective of the United

Nations in the months to come will, therefore, be to continue to build on the recent successes of UNAMSIL and to enhance the strength, cohesiveness and effectiveness of the Mission, as well as to adjust its operational structure to enable it to cope with the current hostile environment and to deter RUF from pursuing the military option.

63. At the same time, it should be recalled that bringing an end to the ordeal of the people of Sierra Leone and achieving a durable peace throughout the country and the region remains the overarching goal of the international community. Achieving this goal requires the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of all combatants; the restoration of Government authority throughout the country, including control over all natural resources; the establishment and/or strengthening of the main national institutions, including democratically accountable armed forces and a national police force; democratic elections and respect for human rights.

64. Under the present circumstances, such objectives can be achieved only with dedicated commitment, resources and patience on the part of the Government of Sierra Leone, its regional partners and the international community. In the short term, it appears unlikely that these objectives can be reached through political means alone. Nor can a purely military option by itself achieve these goals. The preferred collective approach, therefore, should be to concentrate efforts for a political solution based on a robust and credible international military presence. It is evident that the Mission's presence remains indispensable for this purpose, and I recommend, therefore, that the mandate of UNAMSIL, which expires on 7 August 2000, be extended for another six months.

65. In my previous report (S/2000/455), I had made initial recommendations on the expansion of UNAMSIL. However, I am reviewing the requirements of the Mission in the light of changing conditions on the ground and the possible adjustments in its mandate which the Security Council has been considering. I remain convinced that it will be necessary to further strengthen UNAMSIL to enable it to fulfil new tasks in Sierra Leone. I therefore intend to submit proposals to the Security Council in the near future, after a thorough assessment of the political and military situation in Sierra Leone. However, I am conscious that enhancing the strength of UNAMSIL will ultimately depend on the willingness of Member States to make the necessary well-trained and well-equipped troops available to the United Nations, as well as on the continued support of the troop contributors. Assistance from Member States having the capacity to train and equip current and future UNAMSIL units will be crucial in this regard.

66. It would also be important that ECOWAS and the United Nations continue their close cooperation to ensure a common approach in Sierra Leone, including through the coordination mechanism that is being put in place involving the Government of Sierra Leone, ECOWAS and the United Nations.

67. As we focus our efforts on promoting the peace process in Sierra Leone, there is a need to remain mindful of the tensions which continue to mount along the borders of the three Mano River Union countries, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. If unchecked, these tensions could contribute to the further destabilization of Liberia and result in instability in Guinea, which remains host to over 500,000 refugees from neighbouring countries. I welcome the recent decision by the Union to send a joint team to investigate the recent attacks by rebel forces in Lofa County in northern Liberia. In this regard, I would encourage the international community to provide assistance for the efforts currently under way to rejuvenate the Mano River Union organization, which provides a useful mechanism for the promotion of subregional peace and security.

68. The civilian population continues to suffer as a result of the ongoing fighting in many parts of the country. I am deeply concerned about reports of continuing abductions, rape and sexual abuse, destruction and looting of civilian property, and forced recruitment of children. I call upon all parties in Sierra Leone to stop these violations and to end the culture of violence and abuse that seems to have pervaded Sierra Leone. In this connection, I fully support efforts to hold accountable and prosecute those who are responsible for serious crimes in Sierra Leone.

69. I am also concerned that the current hostilities have had a dramatic impact on food security and caused dozens of civilian casualties as well as the displacement of tens of thousands of civilians, increasing their vulnerability to malnutrition, disease and other hardships. It is therefore imperative that all parties to the conflict refrain from attacking the civilian

population and provide safe access for aid workers to all regions of the country.

70. I welcome the adoption on 5 July by the Security Council of resolution 1306 (2000), prohibiting the worldwide importation of rough diamonds from Sierra Leone, except those with a certificate of origin issued by the Government of Sierra Leone, and strengthening the implementation of the embargo against the supply of arms and related *matériel* to non-government forces. This constitutes an important step towards ensuring that the exploitation of diamonds will benefit the people of Sierra Leone and support its development, rather than fuel a destructive civil war. I urge Member States, international organizations and the diamond industry to provide the necessary assistance to the Government of Sierra Leone to help it urgently establish an effective certificate of origin regime under which rough diamonds could be legally exported from Sierra Leone. I expect to announce shortly the appointments of members of the five-person panel established under resolution 1306 (2000) which will, *inter alia*, collect information on possible violations of the arms embargo and the link between the trade in diamonds and arms.

71. It is with deep regret that I report to the Security Council that nine peacekeepers, seven from Nigeria, one from India and one from Jordan, have been killed during the present crisis. I offer my condolences to the families and Governments of those peacekeepers who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of peace. In addition, eight soldiers are still missing.

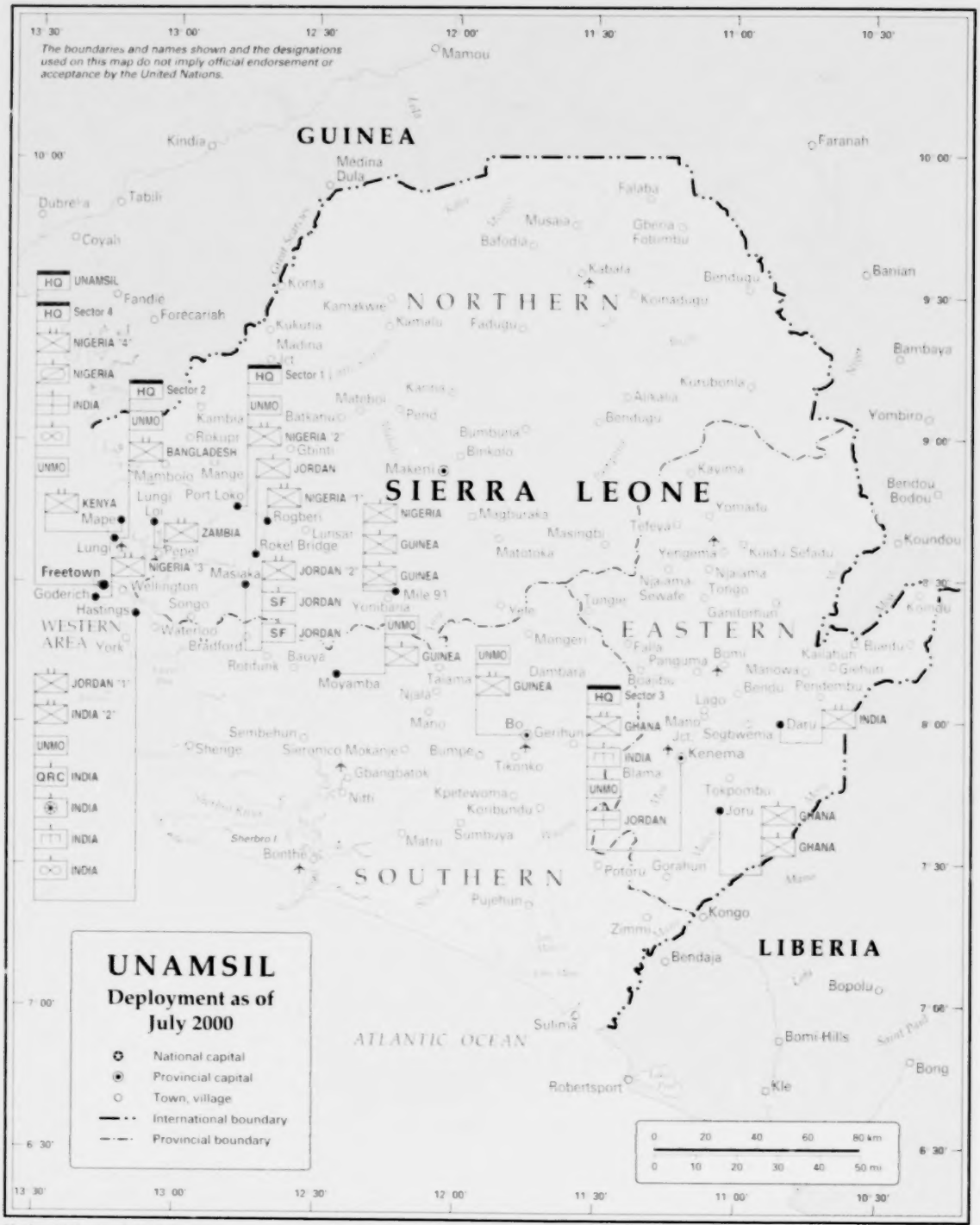
72. I take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to my Special Representative, Oluyemi Adeniji, the UNAMSIL Force Commander, Major General Vijay Kumar Jetley, and the military and civilian personnel of UNAMSIL and other United Nations international agencies in Sierra Leone for carrying out their tasks under extremely difficult and dangerous conditions. Their perseverance, courage and dedication reflects credit on themselves, their countries and the United Nations.

Annex

United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone: contributions as at 26 July 2000

	Military observers	*Staff officers*	*Troops*	*Total*
Bangladesh	12	4	776	792
Bolivia	4			4
Canada	5			5
China	6			6
Croatia	10			10
Czech Republic	5			5
Denmark	2			2
Egypt	10			10
France	3			3
Gambia	26			26
Ghana	4	5	771	780
Guinea	12	2	776	790
India	14	31	3 116	3 161
Indonesia	10			10
Jordan	5	8	1 826	1 839
Kenya	11	13	858	882
Kyrgyzstan	1			1
Malaysia	10			10
Mali	8			8
Nepal	6			6
New Zealand	2			2
Nigeria	4	14	3 200	3 218
Norway	5			5
Pakistan	10			10
Russian Federation	16			16
Slovakia	2			2
Sweden	3			3
Thailand	5			5
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	15	3		18
United Republic of Tanzania	12			12
Uruguay	11			11
Zambia	11	3	774	788
Total	**260**	**83**	**12 097**	**12 440**

Civilian police: Bangladesh: 4; Gambia: 2; Ghana: 3; India: 1; Jordan: 3; Kenya: 3; Malaysia: 3; Namibia: 1; Nepal: 5; Norway: 2; Senegal: 5; Zimbabwe: 2. Total: 34.



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